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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 05 STATE 109375

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TAGS: [MARR](#) [MOPS](#) [PREL](#) [NATO](#) [IZ](#)  
SUBJECT: IRAQ: FIRST TRANSITION TO PROVINCIAL IRAQI CONTROL

REF: A. BAGHDAD 3731 (05)  
[B](#). BAGHDAD 3853 (05)  
[C](#). BAGHDAD 2046  
[D](#). BAGHDAD 2114

Classified By: NEA DAS ROBERT F. GODEC FOR REASONS  
1.4. A, B, AND D.

[1](#)1. (U) This is an action request, see para. 4.

[1](#)2. (C) Iraq Prime Minister Maliki's June 19, 2006 announcement of the transfer of security responsibility from the Multinational Force-Iraq (MNF-I) to Iraqi civilian authorities in Muthanna province is the first of its kind. The Department wishes to emphasize for posts and host governments the positive message of progress for Iraq and its people that this event deserves, but without unnecessarily raising expectations of troop withdrawals or timetables.

[1](#)3. (C/REL-MNF-I) The following background can be drawn upon if necessary when delivering points in para. 5.

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The Transition Process  
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The U.S.-UK-Iraqi Joint Committee to Transfer Security Responsibility (JCTSR) was formed to develop and agree upon the conditions necessary to progressively transfer responsibility for security and domestic order to the Government of Iraq (GOI) and capable Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) (REF A).

The JCTSR decided upon four criteria by which to judge a province's eligibility for transfer (REF B):

- current and projected levels of insurgent activity
- current readiness and capabilities of ISF
- capabilities of provincial governments
- ability of MNF-I to reinforce ISF when necessary

JCTSR assessments of provinces for eligibility to transfer began in April 2006, and the May 2006 assessment concluded that Muthanna met the four necessary conditions (REF C). The Ministerial Committee for National Security (MCNS--which includes General Casey, Amb. Khalilzad, the UK Ambassador and security members of the Iraqi cabinet) approved the recommendation for the transfer of responsibility for Muthanna (REF D) and PM Maliki announced the transfer on June [1](#)9.

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The New Security Arrangements  
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The transfer of security responsibility to Iraqi control in Muthanna means a new security arrangement between the ISF (both army and police) and the MNF-I.

Two key documents define these relationships:

The "Security Authorization" is an agreement between the Prime Minister and the Governor of Muthanna and addresses federal and provincial equities in the security relationship.

The "Implementing Arrangement" is an agreement between GOI and MNF-I and defines the national-level command and control relationships which will take effect after Iraqi authorities assume full responsibility for security.

Each transition will be tailored to each province. For example, a transitioned province which hosts a Provincial Reconstruction Team will by definition have a larger standing complement of MNF-I than a province like Muthanna.

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Press Rollout and Themes  
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14. (U) If Embassy wishes to make a statement it may draw from the following text:

BEGIN TEXT

On June 19 Iraq's Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki announced that security responsibility for Muthanna Province in southern Iraq will transfer from the Multi-National Forces

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(MNF-I) to the civilian-controlled Iraqi Security Forces. Muthanna is the first province to be designated for such a transition.

The announcement by PM Maliki of a joint decision between the Iraqi government and MNF-I represents the progress made in developing the province's ability to govern and to take the lead in providing security. The transition decision also reflects a joint assessment of the overall threat situation in Muthanna, and MNF-I's readiness to support the ISF in its security lead role as necessary.

This transition of security responsibility in Muthanna demonstrates the progress Iraq is making towards self-governance with the assistance of the international community. Australia, Japan and the UK have served in Muthanna as models of international cooperation, providing economic and humanitarian assistance to the people of Iraq as well as security and stability. As Iraq develops and its needs continue to evolve, so too will the nature of international assistance to Iraq in Muthanna and elsewhere.

Other provinces in Iraq will undergo similar transitions when conditions warrant. The international community will continue to work closely with the Government of Iraq to achieve a constitutional, democratic, and pluralistic Iraq which guarantees the rights of all citizens.

END TEXT

The text of Prime Minister Koizumi's 20 June Statement provides a good summary of the accomplishments of Japan's humanitarian efforts in Iraq:

BEGIN TEXT OF JAPANESE STATEMENT

Statement by the Prime Minister of Japan on the Redeployment of Ground Self-defense Force Troops from Samawah

June 20, 2006

The Japanese Government decided today that it will redeploy the Ground Self-defense Force (GSDF) troops that have been engaged in humanitarian and reconstruction activities in Samawah, Iraq, since the beginning of 2003, based on the

Special Measures Law for Humanitarian and Reconstruction Assistance for Iraq, judging that the objective of the GSDF's activities were now fulfilled. In addition, Japan decided to provide support for the UN's activities and the ongoing activities of the MNF, and has reached a decision to newly provide air-lift support to Baghdad and Erbil. In addition, after the redeployment of GSDF, Japan will be providing assistance with a focus on the improvement of economic infrastructure through Yen loans, in coordination with the Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) to be organized by the Multi-National Forces (MNF-I).

The international community has been unified in providing support for Iraq's reconstruction in order to assist the Iraqi people's efforts to reconstruct and rebuild their country. Japan for its part, has been steadily assisting Iraq by combining the contribution by SDF personnel and Official Development Assistance (ODA), as a responsible member of the international community.

With such support by the international community, the Iraqi political process has shown concrete progress. In December last year, the National Assembly elections were conducted. More recently the new Iraqi Government was established. The process of transferring security responsibility to Iraq is moving forward. As seen in such developments, Iraq has taken the first full step to self-sustained reconstruction under the leadership of a democratic government.

In Al-Muthanna Province two and a half years of efforts by the GSDF troops in a wide range of areas including medical services, water provision and repair work on public infrastructure such as schools and roads, as well as Japanese ODA, have yielded visible results including rehabilitation and improvement of local infrastructure and creation of job opportunities. For example, all residents have gained access to basic medical care. In Samawah Maternity and Children's Hospital, post-delivery mortality rate of newborns decreased to about one third of the rate in the first half of 2002. Improvements have been achieved in provision of water and educational environment. On employment, Japanese assistance, including repair work on public facilities by the SDF and job opportunity creation projects through ODA, created a maximum of approximately 6,000 job opportunities per day, and a total of 1.56 million job opportunities. Furthermore, with

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Japanese ODA, construction work has started on a major power plant in Samawah. Once this plant is completed, a leap will be achieved in provision of electricity. In addition, the Government of Japan intends to continue providing reconstruction assistance to this region of Iraq, such as construction of bridges in Samawah, and irrigation projects in Al-Muthanna Province. Such reconstruction assistance projects have led to high appreciation and confidence by the Iraqi Government and the local people.

It is time that the bilateral relationship between Japan and Iraq be transformed to a broader relationship with stronger political and economic relations. The Government of Japan will endeavor to ensure that the results of Japan's reconstruction assistance provided thus far will take root and will work to foster a broad and long-term partnership with Iraq.

The Iraqi Government fully agrees with Japan's basic policy towards reconstruction assistance for Iraq as mentioned above. The Government of Japan takes this opportunity to express its gratitude to the people and government of Iraq that have warmly welcomed the GSDF troops as well as the relevant countries that have cooperated with the GSDF in Samawah, including the UK, Australia, the Netherlands and the US.

I ask for the Japanese people's understanding and support

concerning the above-mentioned decision by the Government of Japan.

END TEXT OF JAPANESE STATEMENT

BEGIN TEXT OF AUSTRALIAN STATEMENT (ABRIDGED)

Prime Minister  
The Hon John Howard MP  
Ministerial Statement to Parliament on the Australian Defence  
Force commitment to southern Iraq  
22 June 2006

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This is an important step towards the Iraqi Government taking control of the country's security situation. Al-Muthanna is the first province to be transferred entirely to Iraqi Provincial Control.

That this step can be taken is due in no small measure to the hard work, bravery and commitment of the Australian Defence Force (ADF). It also reflects the Australian Government's determination to help the Iraqi people secure a better future.

Since May 2005, Australia's Al-Muthanna Task Group has trained about 1,650 Iraqi soldiers of the National Iraqi Army's 2nd Brigade. This Brigade is already conducting security operations in Al-Muthanna and it contributed to the success of the December 2005 elections. In conjunction with other Iraqi security forces, these soldiers will now assume primary responsibility for security within the Al-Muthanna province.

The second key role of Australia's Al-Muthanna Task Group has been to provide a secure environment for the Japanese Iraq Reconstruction Support Group conducting a range of important rehabilitation projects in Al-Muthanna.

These projects have included the provision and technical support to four hospitals; the rehabilitation of approximately 30 health clinics and 35 schools; and the completion of dozens of other infrastructure projects.

Following the Iraqi Prime Minister's announcement on security arrangements in Al-Muthanna, and in accordance with the prospective completion of Japan's reconstruction mission in the province, the Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi has announced that his country's contingent in Al-Muthanna will be withdrawn.

The ADF will continue to provide security for the Japanese engagement until they have completed the final elements of their mission, which is likely to occur by the end of July.

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There is still a job to do in assisting the Iraqi authorities in meeting their security challenges. There remains a need for strong and continued support from the international community.

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After careful consideration by the National Security Committee, the Government has decided that Australian forces will take on a new role to support the Iraqi Government and security forces.

Planning for this role has been done in consultation with our Coalition partners and with the Iraqi Government.

The ADF contingent will relocate from its current base at Camp Smitty near As Samawah in Al Muthanna province to the Coalition Air Base at Tallil, located some 80 kilometers to the south east in the neighboring province of Dhi Qar.

From its base in Tallil, the ADF will contribute to coalition operations in South East Iraq under the banner of Operational Overwatch--the Coalition effort to support the handover of primary responsibility for security to Iraqi authorities.

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The force will also include an ADF Training Team of approximately 30 personnel. Since the beginning of this month, the Training Team has been training and mentoring Iraqi instruction personnel at the Iraqi Army Basic Training Center at Tallil Air Base. We are also making a small training contribution at the Counter Insurgency Academy in Taji, north of Baghdad.

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As part of this engagement, we will also continue the ADF program of reconstruction assistance. This has so far delivered many valuable improvements to services and infrastructure for the local community in critical areas such as transport, health, veterinary and agricultural services and utilities.

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Australia will not be hostage to a particular timetable for withdrawal from Iraq. We will only leave when the job has been finished.

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Helping Iraq to achieve stability and democracy is in Australia's national interest. And it is part of Australia accepting its global responsibilities. Our support is at the request of the Iraqi Government and the Iraqi people and is dependent on progress by Iraqi authorities in managing their own affairs.

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To see the Iraqi people striving to reclaim civil society in the cradle of civilization, sometimes at great cost and against great odds, is a humbling experience for those of us privileged enough to live in a free and democratic society.

The courage of the Iraqi people serves as a constant reminder of why the international community must maintain its support for Iraq's democratic transition and development.

END TEXT OF AUSTRALIAN STATEMENT (ABRIDGED)

15. (C/REL HOST GOVTS) All posts whose host governments contribute to Iraq's security and stability (primarily troop contributing governments) should draw from the following points for use with host government officials at the appropriate level:

The announcement by PM Maliki of a joint decision of the Iraqi government and MNF-I to transfer security responsibility for Muthanna province to Iraqi civilian authorities is good news. It represents the progress made in developing the province's ability to take the lead in its own governance and security.

We congratulate all involved (Australia, Iraq, Japan, Netherlands, UK) for their role in the successful humanitarian mission in Muthanna province.

This event demonstrates the progress Iraq is making towards self-governance with the assistance of the international community.

Australia, Japan and the UK have served in Muthanna as

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models of international cooperation, providing economic and humanitarian assistance to the people of Iraq as well as security and stability.

As Iraq develops and its needs continue to evolve, so too will the nature of international assistance to Iraq in Muthanna and elsewhere.

An example of this transition is the fact that Japanese and Australian assistance to Iraq will not end—they remain engaged to support Iraq's development in political, economic, and security areas.

Japan will:

- provide critical air-lift support mission to MNF-I and to the UN Assistance Mission in Iraq;

- continue to support Iraq's economic infrastructure through yen-loans; and

- assign officers to Baghdad to assist in the coordination and management of Provincial Reconstruction Teams.

Australia will:

- redeploy its troops to Dhi Qar province to carry out operational overwatch and quick reaction force functions;

- continue to train Iraqi Security Forces; and
- continue reconstruction assistance.

-- The transition decision reflects a joint Iraqi-MNF-I assessment of several factors including the overall threat situation in Muthanna, and MNF-I's readiness to support the ISF in its security lead role as necessary.

-- Eventually we plan that all provinces will return to Iraqi control using essentially the same conditions-based process that resulted in Muthanna's transition. Each transition will be tailored to circumstances in each province.

-- International assistance supporting Iraq's security forces, governance capacity, democratic system and reconstruction also facilitate and accelerate the process of transitioning security responsibilities.

-- As part of this international assistance, we encourage all to work with Iraq in developing effective national and provincial governance. The new Constitution devolves more responsibility to the governorates (provinces): Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) provide a crucial link between national and provincial capacity-development efforts. PRTs are designed to provide training and development efforts at the national level, complement them at the provincial level, and provide a link between provincial-level and national level efforts. We believe PRTs are a key component of Iraqi self-reliance and defeating the insurgency and encourage your participation.

-- We join the Iraqi people in thanking you for being part of this historic transition. We expect Iraq will long remember those nations such as yours who stood with Iraq in its pursuit of a constitutional, democratic, and pluralistic Iraq which guarantees the rights of all citizens.

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